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Senate

HUNGER IN EAST TIMOR CONTINUES

● Mr. TSONGAS. Mr. President, on several occasions over the past 2 years, I have drawn attention to the continuing tragedy in the former Portugese colony of East Timor, an island territory that was invaded by Indonesia years ago. On April 28, I rose to submit a concurrent resolution which was also introduced by Representative TONY P. HALL of Ohio in the House, calling upon the President to encourage the Government of Indonesia to change its policies toward East Timor. I did so after receiving consistent, disturbing reports from a wide range of credible sources over a period of many months.

I would like to alert my colleagues to significant new information that confirms past accounts and clearly shows that the situation in East Timor is far worse than I had previously believed. This information is contained in a detailed article that recently appeared in the Philadelphia Inquirer by Rod Nordland, who has shared a Pulitzer Prize for investigative reporting. Mr. Nordland spent 11 days in East Timor in May, the first visit by an American journalist to the territory in 2 years and one of the few by an independent outside observer in the 6 years since Indonesia invaded the island.

To put Mr. Nordland's article in its proper context, I will briefly recount some recent history. Last December 16, I expressed great concern over an account from a distinguished Roman Catholic cleric in East Timor, who charged that an Indonesian military offensive, accompanied by the most gruesome of atrocities, could lead to serious food shortages. I stressed that East Timor was still recovering from the Cambodia-like cataclysm that struck the territory from 1978 through 1980 and suggested that additional food stockpiles be established to help avert further disasters. At that time, I also drew attention to an Amnesty International report which spoke of summary executions and "disappearances" carried out by the Indonesian forces, as well as arbitrary imprisonment, primarily but not exclusively, on the offshore island of Atauro.

Then, on February 8, I cited Australian press accounts of an appeal for food aid made by the Apostolic Administrator of East Timor, Msgr. Martinho da Costa Lopes, to the Australian Catholic Relief Agency. I stated that the Australian Government had responded immediately with a pledge of 1,000 tons of corn for the Australian Catholic Relief shipment, but was careful to note that Australian Catholic Relief had not actually been permitted to enter East Timor to assess the situation and supervise distribution of the food aid. I called for the establishment of full-time, on-the-ground operations by qualified, independent international relief agencies, and expressed my belief that a neutral international presence is needed in East Timor to protect the civilian population from further violence as well as to distribute food and medicine.

On April 28, when I submitted my resolution on East Timor, I stated that I was very pleased to learn that the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) had been allowed to visit East Timor prisons, for the first time since the 1975 Indonesian invasion, over a 2-week period in late Feburary. I registered my hope that ICRC would be able to continue its valuable activities in the territory.

While noting that the ICRC prison visits were undoubtedly a positive step, I emphasized that they only constituted one aspect of the situation. I stressed that the Indonesian Government had flatly refused to accept the 1,000 tons of corn offered by Australia to fortify the Timor food stockpiles. The reason for this stand, according to the Sydney Morning Herald, was "Jakarta's continuing anger over the credence given by the Australian Catholic Relief to Msgr. da Costa Lopes' letter" which the Indonesian Government claimed "was mischievous and false."

I noted that Monsignor Lopes apparently had good reason to worry about the food situation, not to mention the human rights situation in general: The Far Eastern Economic Review had re-

ported on March 19 that "some observers are concerned that food shortages may develop and that Indonesia's angry reaction to international criticism of its East Timor policy may hinder relief activities," and added that relief agencies want some relief work to continue in East Timor but that "Jakarta has been reluctant to admit that there is such a need."

Let us now turn to Rod Norland's May 28 article in the Philadelphia Inquirer, where he writes that East Timor faces a new wave of famine, the second in 5 years; that evidence of serious food shortages can be found all over the country; that even in the immediate vicinity of the capital, Dili, 18 of 22 children weighed and measured by Mr. Nordland were found to be chronically malnourished, or slowly starving, according to World Health Organization standards.

There was ample time to prevent such a calamity: Warnings of serious food shortages that would result from the Indonesian military offensive of last July through September were issued long ago. Making the situation even worse, top Indonesian military officials in East Timor still deny that a problem exists. Mr. Nordland provides evidence that the Indonesian military tries to intimidate ordinary Timorese into saying that there is enough food when clearly this is false.

While Mr. Nordland's extensive article deals with a wide range of issues and should be read as a whole to capture the full flavor of the situation, I wish to say that I am frankly appalled at the needless suffering and oppression that the people of East Timor continue to face, at the callousness and disregard with which they are being treated. While the Nordland article is not easy to summarize, its essence is captured in the words of a top Indonesian military official, Col. A. P. Kalangie, as quoted by Mr. Nordland:

He recently contrasted Indonesia's takeover (of East Timor) with the current dispute over the Falkland Islands. "The British generals are bad. You don't give a little bit, a little bit, you go all at once. Like what we did here is all at once—bok!—and then explain to the rest of the world that we are here. This is how to do it, like the Russians in Afghanistan."

The resolution that I have introduced on April 28 has received bipartisan support. It addresses the critical humanitarian problems of East Timor and calls for a just political settlement, in accordance with the principles of international law. I urge all of my colleagues who have not yet done so to support this resolution. Mr. Nordland reports that many of the people he managed to interview privately were fearful about talking, but "dozens did so nevertheless, saying as one did, 'Please tell the world so they can help the Timorese people.'" Now more than ever, the future of the Timorese people may depend on our action.

Mr. President, I ask that Rob Nordland's article from the Philadelphia Enquirer be printed in the RECORD. Mr. Nordland is to be commended for his excellent investigative work, which has provided us with an invaluable firsthand account of this tragedy. I urge all of my colleagues to give his article their closest attention.

The article follows:

[From the Philadelphia Inquirer, May 28, 1982]

HUNGER: UNDER INDONESIA, TIMOR REMAINS A LAND OF MISERY

(By Rod Nordland)

DILI, EAST TIMOR.—East Timor, the former Portuguese colony that was forcibly annexed by Indonesia in 1976, is a land beset by widespread malnutrition and hunger. This year's grain harvest was a dismal failure; now, even as many Timorese suffer through longstanding food shortages they face a new wave of famine, the second in five years.

Adding to the misery of East Timor, the incidence of disease is essentially unchallenged by the province's inadequate medical care; a six-year guerrilla war continues to disrupt the populace, and anti-insurgency measures imposed by a military government have stripped Timorese of their civil rights.

Thousands of people are political prisoners—most of them simply because they are related, often distantly, to a fighter with the guerrilla group known as Fretilin—the Revolutionary Front for Independent East Timor. Hundreds of thousands have been relocated in a policy to depopulate the countryside and deprive the guerrillas of civilian support.

These are some of the conclusions reached during an 11-day tour of the province of East Timor, the first visit by an American journalist in two years and one of the few allowed to an independent outside observer in the six years of Indonesian rule. They are conclusions that are supported by a number of clergymen, civilian officials and aid organizations.

Nevertheless, Indonesian officials hotly contest them all. According to these officials, there was no poor harvest this year, only isolated food shortages; there is no famine, only isolated cases of malnutrition; there are no political prisoners, just a rehabilitation center where the relatives of guerrillas are kept for their own good; the countryside has not been depopulated, it has been "resettled."

"We have nothing to hide in East Timor," Adm. Sudomo of Indonesia's Command for the Restoration of Peace and Order said recently when he issued the invitation to visit the province, which has been a source of international concern since the mid-1970s.

Year after year, the United Nations has condemned as illegal Indonesia's forcible takeover of East Timor and has demanded that it withdraw its troops and allow for self-determination. Portugal itself has refused to acknowledge the annexation, insist-

ing that Fretilin is the appropriate governing power of a free East Timor.

The recent visit included tours by helicopter and jeep of 15 towns and villages in eight of the province's 13 districts. Despite almost perpetual close monitoring by Indonesian military and civilian officials, it was still possible to see obvious signs of large-scale malnutrition and disease, as well as overt depression.

It also was sometimes possible to meet independently with Timorese in and out of government, with clergy of the Roman Catholic Church in the mostly Catholic province and with average Timorese from many walks of life.

While many of the scores of Timorese interviewed were frankly fearful about talking, dozens did so nonetheless, saying, as one did, "Please tell the world so they can help the Timorese people." At least six of those interviewed, it was learned, were summoned afterward to military intelligence headquarters and interrogated about what they had said, often for many hours.

The picture that emerged was one of a population that widely regards the Indonesians as a foreign occupying force. Even many leaders who once favored annexation by Indonesia have become disenchanted—in some cases openly—with Indonesian rule, or at least with the military officials that represent it here.

The behavior of those military authorities "can only be described as being the behavior of conquerors toward a conquered people," said a petition signed by a pro-Indonesian member of the provincial assembly, Joao Pedro Soares, and sent last year to the central government in Jakarta, Indonesia's capital, appealing for relief. A short time later, Soares and three other East Timorese members of parliament whose names appeared on the petition disappeared, reemerging after a month to swear that it was a fake.

The Indonesian rule has been characterized by fear and marred by accusations of torture and widespread abuse of civilians by soldiers. There are virtually no civil liberties. Peasants are told to whom they must sell their coffee and at what price. No one may leave his village or hometown without permission. Telephone calls and telegrams to places outside East Timor are forbidden.

No one may leave the province without special—and rarely granted—permission. That applies as well to the more than 4,000 citizens of other countries who live in the province. According to military police statistics, there are 916 Portugese nationals and 3,158 Taiwanese nationals on East Timor; many of them have requested and been refused permission to return to their own countries.

The Timorese have already suffered a great deal since the 1974 revolution in Portugal brought to power leftists who initiated a precipituous decolonization of Portugese holdings around the world. One of those holdings was the eastern half of the island of Timor. (West Timor had been a Dutch colony until joining Indonesia when that country won independence from the Dutch on December 27, 1949.)

In East Timor, the initial struggle for power after decolonization ended when the leftist, pro-independence Fretilin wrested control from two other parties, UDT, or Unity, which wanted to remain a colony of Portugal, and Apodite, a small minority party that favored integration with Indonesia.

Fretilin declared the short-lived Democratic Republic of East Timor on November 28, 1975. A week later, Indonesian paratroopers and marines invaded Dili, and within a few months they had taken over most of East Timor. In July 1976, it was proclaimed Indonesia's 27th province.

But serious fighting with the Fretilin guerrillas did not end, and the years-long disruption interfered with planting. The ultimate result was a major famine that devastated the province between 1978 and 1980, with great loss of life.

Word of conditions in East Timor leaked out and, although Indonesia initially denied reports of the famine, in 1980 and 1981 the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Catholic Relief Services of the United States were allowed to begin a relief program in the province. It was terminated last year by the Indonesian government, which said it was no longer necessary.

How many people died in the fighting and famine before the relief program began may never be known for sure, but based on Indonesia's census figures, there were only 550,000 persons in East Timor in 1980; in 1974, the Portugese authorities had counted 650,000.

The conclusion that may be drawn from these figures is not as obvious as it appears, because the Portuguese census was a voluntary one: People were asked to go to their local administrative centers to be counted, but many lived far in the mountains and did not make the trip. Under the Indonesian regime, on the other hand, people have been concentrated in towns and resettlement centers, and the 1980 census was a thorough, door-to-door affair.

Nevertheless, Catholic authorities doubt the Indonesian results, and the church's own census puts the current population at 425,000, a loss of 225,000 people from the Portuguese figure.

While still recovering from the terrible famine of the late 1970s, Timorese agriculture was dealt another blow last year, when, just as the planting season was beginning and only a few months after the government had ordered the relief program ended, the Indonesian army launched Operation Security.

Every male in the province age 13 or older was ordered into the mountain to help the army to conduct a giant sweep designed to finish the Fretilin once and for all. The civilians, mostly armed with sticks and farm implements, formed human chains and encircled the rugged mountain fastnesses where the guerillas were believed to be hiding. Army troops moved ahead of them, theoretically to beat their quarry into this human net.

Many of those caught in the net, however, were civilians who themselves had resisted government attempts to make them leave their homes in the mountains—the traditional dwelling place for Timorese—and move to resettlement centers.

According to the top church authority here, apostolic administrator Msgr. Martinho da Costa Lopes, who is widely known as "the bishop," at least 1,000 civilians perished in the operation, which lasted from two to four months between June and September 1981. In one action alone, he said, 500 civilians were killed at Laclut in Viqueque District.

"Many Timorese were killed, including . . . innocent children, pregnant women and defenseless people without any crimes except their willingness to be independent from all oppression," Msgr. da Costa Lopes said in a recent interview here.

The Indonesian government says, officially, that Operation Security was a success and that it reduced the ranks of Fretilin to 300 men, sharing 120 weapons. Privately, however, several officials say there are still as many as 1,200 armed guerrillas at large.

The greatest casualty of Operation Security, in fact, was the 1981-82 corn and rice crop, much of which was not planted before the rainy season began in September because the men of East Timor were with the army in the mountains.

That crop was to have been harvested in March, but it was a disaster, according to Msgr. da Costa Lopes, clergy elsewhere in the province and other independent sources. The International Committee of the Red Cross, which still has one representative on East Timor, stated in a report in March that, according to official figures, the anticipated crop of 40,000 to 60,000 tons of maize and 30,000 to 40,000 tons of rice would not be harvested in 1982 because of bad weather, attacks by rodents and "movement of population in the second half of 1981 [which] made planting in some areas, specially in the south, insufficient."

According to clergy here, the result has been a famine or near-famine in many parts of the province, particularly in Baucau and Viqueque districts in the east, where the continuing fighting between government troops and Fretilin guerrillas has been most severe.

Msgr. da Costa Lopes hesitates to use the term "famine"; he prefers to say that more than half of the population in those districts, where more than 100,000 people live, has "insufficent food to maintain life." In addition, he said, hunger and malnutrition are endemic throughout the country.

"In Viqueque, they begin to eat the sagu [boiled palm pulp], and this is a sign for Timorese that famine is coming," he said.

Other clergymen stated the case more strongly. "If you quote me as saying this, I'll be killed," said one, who was recently in the eastern part of the province. "Famine is always a relative term, and there is hunger and malnutrition all over the country, but it's truly a famine in this region" of Baucau and Viqueque.

One of the worst-hit towns in Viqueque, according to Msgr. da Costa Lopes, is Uatolari, a mountainside town close to the scene of the heaviest fighting. Not so, East Timor's vice governor, Francisco Xavier Lopes da Cruz.

"The bishop, you know, he just stays here in Dili, he doesn't go very often to the mountains," Lopes da Cruz said. "Uatolari, they have a surplus, plenty of corn. The military commander told me he bought 26 million rupiahs (about $41,000) of corn, so how could they be starving in Uatolari?

"The truth is," he added, "no famine here in East Timor—you can see one or two people who don't have enough food, but not a famine."

A prominent Timorese viewed the issue of famine politically. Like many, he was clearly sympathetic to the guerrilla movement: "The Fretilin is a symbol of resistance" to Indonesia, he said. "In the heart of the people there will always be resistance. That's why I think the Indonesians are happy to see famine. The Timorese people will always be a problem so, they figure, just eliminate the problem."

When a party of officials and a reporter descended on Uatolari by helicopter the grassy public square immediately was crowded with scores of children, standing just at the edge of the rotor wash. Many of them appeared to be severely malnourished, with the classic distended bellies and stick-like limbs that denote long-term, serious hunger.

Or so the reporter thought. Hans Meier-Eybers, the project director for a Catholic Relief Services agricultural recovery program in East Timor, a $5 million, U.S. government-funded program, thought otherwise. Meier-Eybers, a Swiss surveyed the children critically and said, "They look like healthy kids to me. Sure, they're a little dirty, but that is all."

An Indonesian doctor, S.C. Kurniati, approached and was asked if he thought the children appeared to be malnourished. "You can see for yourelf," he said, seeming a bit taken aback by the question: "These children are all mainourished."

In another mountainside town in Viqueque District, Uato Carabao, which was also visited by helicopter, the picture of apparent starvation was the same. Tucked onto a narrow, cloud-covered shelf on the mountain's edge, Uato Carabao also is close to the fighting and, as a result, the town's residents are forbidden to go up the mountain slopes to tend their fields. As the helicopter touched down briefly, people emerged wraithlike from the mist and stared without smiling while the helicopter picked up visiting medical personnel and swooped off again.

Although visits were permitted to the dis-

tricts of Los Palos and Baucau, reportedly the past and present sites of the heaviest fighting with Fretilin, they were confined to the district capitals. No visits at all were permitted to places like Lufa in Los Palos, and Batumacela, Beguia, Quelicai and Laga in Baucau—where clergymen say widespread starvation exists.

In Baucau, district administrative staff member Sinago, an Indonesian, introduced Sister Osario Saurez, a Timorese nun who is principal of the Catholic primary school there.

She listened as Sinago described what a success Operation Security had been. "Everytime we go to a vilage now," he said, "they are happy to see us."

"Because of the political situation," Sister Saurez said quietly, "because the people had to help the military for the Operation Security, they were not able to plant the fields."

"There is plenty of food here," Sinago said insistently, and a little nervously.

The nun continued to contradict him with a soft-spoken resolve that clearly astonished some of the officials present. "We are very short of food, namely in Baguia, Quelicai and Laga. But even here the food is not sufficient, the health care is not sufficient. Last year it is better, this year it is worse because of Operation Security."

The problem has been complicated, she explained, because much of the population has been resettled in the lowlands, far from the mountainside fields. In Baucau District, for instance, 61,000 of the 74,000 people in the district now live clustered around the town of Baucau town proper.

"They can grow enough food there," aid Sinago.

"More than 50 percent of the people are short of food," Sister Saurez said.

Evidence of serious food shortages can be found all over the country, not just in the hard-hit areas in the eastern districts. On a trip to Aileu, a mountain district just 30 miles south of the capital of Dili by rough jeep road, malnourished people were a frequent sight along the way.

At a resettlement village called Saburia, just outside the district seat of Aileu, the party, which included half a dozen military and civilian officials as well as a journalist, stopped to see the corrugated tin houses the Indonesian government had built for people resettled there from the mountains.

Saburia lies in a deep mountain valley. The village chief is a Timorese, but his "assistant" is an Indonesian, they and a military intelligence major named Marsidik accompanied the journalist as he interviewed residents.

Bernardo, 56, who lives with his wife and 10-year-old son, sat on the bare dirt floor of his house, which was devoid of possessions of any kind; there was also no sign of food in the house. Asked how the harvest had been, he surveyed the circle of officials and, after a long pause, said, "There is not enough to eat."

The next house was identical, except that nine persons lived in it and that it contained a piece of furniture, a table. Under the table—the coolest place at midday in the tin house—lay a boy sweating and shaking in what his family said was a three-day-old malarial fever. Other children in the household had bloated bellies and emaciated limbs. Thomas Ferreria, the family spokesman, was asked through an interpreter about his family's condition.

"Tell him," Maj. Marsidik warned Ferreria in Indonesian, "that it's OK here."

Ferreria did as he was told.

"So even though the crops are bad, you have enough food for the whole family?" he was asked, in English.

"Tell him you have enough until the next rainy season," said Marsidik in Indonesian.

"We have enough until the next rainy season," Ferreria said.

At the Betora parish church on the outskirts of Dili, Sister Josephine Bordalio, a Spanish Carmelite nun who has worked here since 1979, single-handedly runs a clinic in which she sees 160 seriously ill people a day, including "many, many cases of malnutrition," she said. Most of the patients come to her clinic because the government-run facilities often have no medicine and no medical personnel.

"Tuberculosis is the most common disease, but hunger is the biggest problem," she said. "They come here and I give them medicine for TB, but then they go home and they have no food in their houses, so how can they get better?"

In the Lahane neighborhood of Dili, where hundreds of families have been forced to live in temporary huts along the steep banks of a mountain stream, severe malnutrition is widespread and apparent. Most of Lahane's residents were moved to Dili from their farms in the surrounding mountains; in Dili they have no job skills and little work.

Of 22 Lahane children under the age of 12, whose body weights and measurements were taken on May 9, 18 were proved to be chronically malnourished, according to standards adopted by the World Health Organization.

"If the situation is this bad in Dili," said Msgr. da Costa Lopes, "you can imagine what it's like in Baucau or Los Palos. I've been there—to Laga, Baguia, Los Palos last

October. Even at that time there was hunger, and now it is far worse."

East Timor's de facto ruler in an army colonel named A. P. Kalangie. A non-Timorese who holds enormous power despite his modest title as East Timor provincial secretary, he noted in a recent interview that Indonesia had refused an Australian donation of 1,000 tons of corn because Australia had continued to criticize conditions in East Timor, which is only 350 miles off its north coast.

In place of the Australian grain, Col. Kalangie said, the Indonesian government is itself sending 1,000 tons of grain to East Timor. "But we won't just give it away," he added. "If you give people something for nothing, they get lazy."

"Yes," agreed Catholic Relief Service's Meier-Eybers, "and soon you have an island of beggars."

"That's what they are always telling me," said a priest in Dili. "We have to stop bringing in food so the people will make it for themselves,' but these people are working hard and still they are hungry.

"What I cannot understand is the reluctance of the Indonesian government to allow one independent team to visit East Timor to see the real situation and assess its normality for themselves," said Michael Whiteley of Australian Catholic Relief, which in the past has been active in raising aid money for the Timorese.

East Timor has enough foreigners who are refereeing us," Col. Kalangie said testily. There are two. Meier-Eybers is one of them, and agreed heartily with Kalangie. The representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Cedric Neukomm, is the second. He declined to be interviewed.

"The Red Cross doesn't want to say the truth," said Msgr. da Costa Lopes, "because they are afraid the Indonesian government will throw them out, and they want to stay to provide some help."

"When we were kids," said a man from a Portuguese-Timorese family, "our mothers used to say to us, 'Don't eat so fast, the Indonesians aren't coming.'" It was something the East Timorese long feared.

In December 1975, when the Indonesians finally did come, Col. Kalangie was one of the Commanders of the invasion.

He recently contrasted Indonesia's takeover with the current dispute over the Falkland Islands: "The British generals are bad. You don't give a little bit, a little bit, you go all at once. Like what we did here, is all at once —bok! — and then explain to the rest of the world that we are here. That is how to do it, like the Russians in Afghanistan."

Now he is enthusiastic about the government's far-reaching resettlement policy. Since "integration," 150 new resettlement centers have been built and 50 more are planned by the end of this year, he said. To make it easier to control the population and to provide food and medical aid, education and other amenities, people have been moved from the mountains to these resettlement villages, usually in the lowlands, he explained.

"It is the new Indonesian civilization we are bringing," Kalangie said. "And it is not easy to civilize the backward peoples."

While the resettlement scheme may be effective in denying support to the guerrillas, critics say it has serious flaws. There was a good historical reason for the Timorese aversion to the lowlands: Malaria there is virtually epidemic, water supplies are poor and irregular, and the climate is far hotter than that of the highlands.

Still, under Indonesian rule the province's road system is being vastly improved; color television—as Kalangie is fond of pointing out—was introduced here even before it came to Portugal; there are new public works in virtually every large town, public buses now travel the highways and dozens of government schools have been opened.

"In many things, the Indonesians have done very well, far better than the Portuguese," a Timorese who is generally pro-Indonesian said in an interview. "Only in social justice and health have they fallen down." Later he was seized by military intelligence and interrogated for hours about the interview, according to well-informed sources.

"A referendum now would go in favor of Indonesia," said Lucio Engenio da Encarnacao, 55, manager of the Dili Hotel and a Portuguest citizen who has been trying unsuccessfully to get Indonesian government permission to leave. "I have to admit that in transportation, education, many areas, the Indonesians did in five years what Portugal didn't do in hundreds of years.

"As for freedom," he concluded, "We never had it under Portugal so we don't miss it now."

"Sure, in Portuguese times, many things were bad," said a former colonial government employee. "But it's not a comparison between Indonesia and Portugal, but between Indonesia and the independence we could have had."

"This whole island is just a big prison," said a part-Timorese man who holds Portuguese citizenship and said he wanted to join his family in Australia. According to reliable sources, he is one of 700 Portuguese who have been registered with the Red Cross as would-be emigres. "We are being held hostage here until Portugal recognizes Indonesia's takeover of East Timor," he said.

The people on Atauro Island are hostages of a different sort. Thousands of Timorese are being held on the island, 15 miles north of Dili, and Indonesian authorities have announced their intention of keeping the internees there until every last known Fretilin guerrilla surrenders. Authorities freely acknowledge that the only reason they are being held there is that they are related to known or suspected guerrillas.

Between June and September last year, 3,785 such people—entire families, including young children—were moved to Atauro and left there with no food supplies, according to church sources. Quiet pressure by the International Committee of the Red Cross persuaded the Indonesians to allow the Red Cross to begin an emergency feeding and medical-care program in February.

But by then, according to Indonesian government figures, 176 internees had died in an outbreak of contagious disease. Some think it was cholera; other say it was gastroenteritis. Both are conditions that could have been aggravated by the crowded conditions in what the government calls the "rehabilitation camp."

It consists of 55 plywood and corrugated-tin barracks each measuring 20 by 60 feet and housing an average of 65 people. For privacy, the inhabitants hang plastic sheets as room dividers.

"It is for their own good, and they like to

be here," Col. Kalangie contended during a guided tour of the camp. He said many of the internees had been harassed by guerrilla relatives, or forced to provide them with food, and he asked, "Does this look like a concentration camp to you?

In Barracks B-2, many of the more than 50 inhabitants were there because they were related to a single Fretilin member, Onrato da Costa; some were only cousins or distant inlaws. Da Costa's sister, Amelia da Costa Fernandes, was asked through an official interpreter how she felt about being imprisoned.

The interpreter repeated the question and Miss da Costa Fernandes, with bowed head and frightened expression, mumbled one or two words.

"She said they are grateful to the government who take care of them so they don't feel they are prisoners, but like others they can live as they want," the interpreter translated.

He was asked to inquire how long she thought her brother would stay in the mountains.

"God knows," she replied, her head still bowed.

Kalangie acknowledged that at least some residents of the camp were not pleased to be there. "You know, east or west, home is best," he said. "But maybe some of those who are in the mountains will feel their family is unhappy so they will come down. It is a positive system."

And if they don't come down, he said, the prisoners of Atauro Island will stay where they are.

The most serious civil-liberties challenge raised in East Timor came last year in the petition of the four assemblymen, who stressed the lack of legal recourse under military authorities.

"Although five years of integration have passed, although security has been restored by stages and in a variety of ways, although the masses of people have constantly made endless sacrifices," it said, "it is not yet possible to experience the implementation of law and discipline in this young province of East Timor."

The petition cited numerous instances of murder, torture and sexual assault by soldiers and officials against civilians. "These people or groups commit murders without due process or the laws concerning investigation. Feelings of fear are widespread among the people. . . ."

All four of the men who signed the petition now repudiate it as a forgery and say they had nothing to do with it. Msgr. da Costa Lopes said he felt sorry for the men, who he maintained were forced to recant after having been held in solitary confinement on the island of Bali for a month.

The author of the petition is believed to have been Joao Pedro Soares. According to Mulya Lubis, Jakarta director of the Legal Aid Society, Soares visited the society's offices to seek protection after the petition was filed.

Soares, during a tense interview at his home here, first denied ever having visited Lubis. Then, when a reporter mentioned having seen a photograph Lubis had taken of him during the visit, Soares said, "I might have been in their offices, but I didn't take part in this."

One of the central charges in the petition was confirmed by Manuel Carascalao, a prominent coffee planter. Timor produces some of the world's best coffee, much of it grown on small, individually owned plots that provide a source of cash income for peasant families who otherwise make a subsistence living growing corn, rice or cassava.

After integration with Indonesia, Carascalao said, the military authorities granted a coffee monopoly to a Java-based company, P.T. Denok Hernandez International, and all growers, small and large, were ordered to sell their coffee to Denok, which became the only authorized exporter.

The Denok firm is widely believed to be owned by Maj. Gen Leonardus "Benny" Murdani, Indonesia's chief of military intelligence and the man in ultimate command of East Timor.

The prices Denok set for the purchase of coffee were absurdly low; currently they are about 25 cents a pound for arabica coffee and 18 cents for robusta, less than half what buyers pay growers in Java and in other places in Indonesia.

Meanwhile, because of food shortages, the price of rice and other staple foods here is twice what it is elsewhere in Indonesia. The result is that a peasant grower cannot purchase a 50-cent pound of rice with the proceeds from a pound of his coffee.

"During the coffee harvest" in June and July, a knowledgeable Timorese said, "there are searches at all the military checkpoints—but they're not looking for guns. They're looking for coffee."

The soldiers make sure the coffee is sold to Denok, and growers are even prohibited from trading or bartering their coffee for basic necessities in local markets.

One evening, a young Timorese man fell quickly into step beside a reporter on Dili's Rua Antonio de Carvalho. "We are not allowed to speak to foreigners," he said. "But I just want to tell you. Before, we had Portuguese colonialism. Now, we have Indonesian colonialism."

When Indonesians began consolidating control in the province, they told everyone that the East Timorese people would be *sama sama*, which in Indonesian means roughly, "everyone equal." The slogan was less than successful, however, since in Tetum, the chief Timorese dialect, *sama sama* means "trample, trample."●